



**W**elcome to the Ripline in this issue we say goodbye to Lee Hopper as President and welcome in Simon Jenkins as his successor, the other changes to the committee are set out below. There is an update on the solo around the world attempt, and also articles about a BUHABs summer trip and a lazy Sunday afternoon.

### Up and coming Events

Due to the bad weather on Monday the tether at Will Hall had to be cancelled. However we may plan to re-do this event when the weather improves. Please check your e-mail after Easter to see if this even is going to take place.

### Notes Form the Editor...

This winter has been one of the best ever for flying, however the signing up list have been rather empty. The lists only go up when there is a good chance of us flying, nobody likes getting up and dress and then finding out it is a bit too windy but that is all part and parcel of ballooning. I have looked in my log, I have signed up 17 times since January, and over 50% of the time, the balloon has flown. So if you are not signing up why not? You really do get out what you put in, and for those who are trying and putting in the effort the reward is worth waiting for. In fact I signed up five times before I got my first flight and putting time and effort in made me appreciate my flight all the more. So please keep trying it is worth it in the end, soft landings.

### The AGM:

On Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> March BUHABs held, it's AGM. The new committee will be in place as of October this year. However, Lee Hooper has decided to stand down as president, so as of now we welcome Simon Jenkins to the position of president and thank Lee for the many years of service he has given to the club. I would also like to thank Will Temple and Tim Dudman who also stand down in October. Both Tim and Will have done lots to help move the club forward and help keep it running and will be sadly missed. I would also like to take this opportunity to wish all three of them luck in their future chosen professions. The positions on the committee where filled by **The President:** Simon Jenkins, **Secretary:** Peter Davis **Union Treasurer:** Tim Locke **Flying Treasurer:** Paul Spellward **Transport Officer:** Simon Church **Social Secretary:** John Burnett. Full details of the minutes will be made available of the BUHABs web site.

## Around the world Update

### *Balloonist Uliassi launches from Loves Park quarry, attempts to fly around the world solo*

LOVES PARK — Kevin Uliassi floated into the Midwest skies early this morning in his latest solo attempt to fly a hot-air balloon around the world. Uliassi lifted off from the Nimtz Road stone quarry at 12:50a.m. He expects to take 14 to 20 days to circle the globe. He would be the first to do it solo.

Eleven months ago, Bertrand Piccard of Switzerland and Brian Jones of Britain piloted the Breitling Orbiter 3 in the first successful around-the-world flight.

Uliassi, a Chicago Heights native who now lives in Scottsdale, Ariz., is sporting a new 160-foot balloon for this trip. Still named J. Renee, after his wife, the new balloon is the same Rozier-type.

Uliassi's first around-the-world attempt launched from the Nimtz Road stone quarry on Dec. 31, 1997.

Barely two hours later, he was down in an Indiana cornfield, the victim of a helium leak. Last year, Uliassi was beset by health problems and bad weather and never attempted a launch. A crowd of about 200 -- including family, friends and media-- gathered to see Uliassi off under cloudless skies. Temperatures were in the upper 30s, a far cry from the 1997 launch when temperatures were near zero. In the crowd were Chris and Candace Zarada of Cherry Valley with their 3-year-old daughter, Carrin.

"We're under orders from our parents to watch this," said Candace, who said the family had just moved here from Wisconsin a week ago. "We saw it on the news the first time (1997) in Wisconsin." Chris Zarada said he thought, "It would be pretty cool to maybe see history." "I'm here for one reason only, my son (Ashwin, 3)," said Sunil Puri. "I wanted to tell Kevin to say hello to my grandma when he flies over India. Really, this just shows you how small the world really is. Uliassi said he was making this trip because he didn't want to miss the opportunity. "It's not so much why I want to do it again," the adventurous architect said, "but if I didn't do it, how could I live with myself?" His wife, J. Renee, said she's not worried about the long flight. "I know he's an excellent pilot and an engineer." J. Renee will wait out the flight in Arizona. "I'm flying back tomorrow so I can go to work," said J. Renee, a purchasing director at a Scottsdale hospital. If all goes well, Uliassi and his balloon will cross the Atlantic Ocean, fly over Europe and then south over North Africa before continuing east. He has received clearance to fly over every country likely to be on his route. Uliassi, unlike other balloonists, flies in a small, unpressurized, unheated cabin. While temperatures at 35,000 feet can reach minus 65 degrees, an onboard heater will keep the cabin at about 60 degrees. Uliassi has about seven tons of supplies and equipment with him, including an onboard Global Positioning Satellite system. A pulse oximeter monitors Uliassi's red blood cells or oxygen level. He has a cellular phone and laptop computers to communicate with his home base in Homewood. Should the balloon go down over water, the capsule is designed to float. It's also built to withstand the impact from a fall of 800 feet per minute. Uliassi's takeoff is determined by the polar jet stream, which dips south in the winter and provides strong winds to power the balloon's flight. The J. Renee will cruise the wind currents between 50 and 150 miles per hour. The launch attempt cost about \$500,000, not including several hundred thousand dollars in in-kind services.

## Easter Availability

Now you have read the newsletter and feel enthused to go ballooning take just five minutes to fill out the availability form and send it back. The sooner you do it the greater the change you have of flying. Enjoy your Easter and hopefully I see some of you out over the holiday period.

## Note from the PUT – 1999 Summer Trip to France

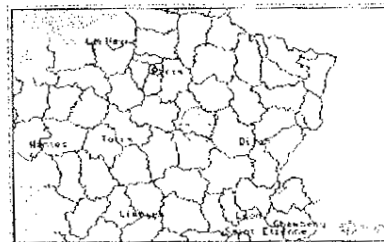
Yet another issue, yet another column. It's getting a bit harder to choose new subjects to write about. I thought that in this issue I would mention last years (1999) summer holiday in Vermenton, France. Details are a bit sketchy due to the strength of the beer but I can recall a general overview. BUHABS and friends have taken a trip to Vermenton for many years and I think this coming summer will break a continuous record. [We are planning a trip closer to home this summer and entering the UK National Ballooning Championships.]

The weather in France in July is excellent for ballooning and the landowner relations very friendly. You can drive into almost any field you like and take off without a complaint from the landowner. Retrieving is a lot easier too – just drive straight in! In Vermenton itself, a couple of Britons run a local balloon company called 'France Mongolfiers' and they allowed us to refuel there using their bulk Propane tank.

(Mongolfier is the French for hot air balloon). Vermenton is sort of in the middle of France, (My geography is appalling)



and so driving there was pretty tiring and took a long time. My first van driving experience was in France, on the wrong side of the road and I nearly didn't make it around the first corner (no-one told me it didn't have power steering!) The accommodation consisted of tents on a large campsite with various amenities including a really good modern shower block. There were tennis courts, canoes and bicycles for hire during the day and the town to explore. Eight of us



went with the BUHABS balloon (see photo) – Myself, Tom, Helen, Ann, Phil, Nathan, Kate and Alison. Kate and Alison had not been ballooning before and took more interest in tennis towards the end of the week – too many early starts I think. There were a couple of other balloons (and a hopper - single man balloon) flown by Paul, Lee and Robin. Paul and Lee were teaching a BBC journalist to fly and so we all appeared on local BBC Bristol TV when we got home. The weather was varied and we were presented with fog, wind, rain and thunder as well as the sunshine. We all enjoyed the week of ballooning and sampled some of the French food. Phil and I decided to go the whole hog and try interesting things like Horse steak, Snails (always served with garlic) and Frogs legs pate (which, looking at the ingredients was mostly pork) Others were more content to consume large quantities of

Leffe or wine. All in all, everyone had a good holiday and we flew an average of once a day. Although some of the other more dedicated balloonists probably managed nearer twice that! Ballooning in France makes a nice change from the UK and gave me the chance to speak some of the French I learnt at school. Hopefully next year we will go again.

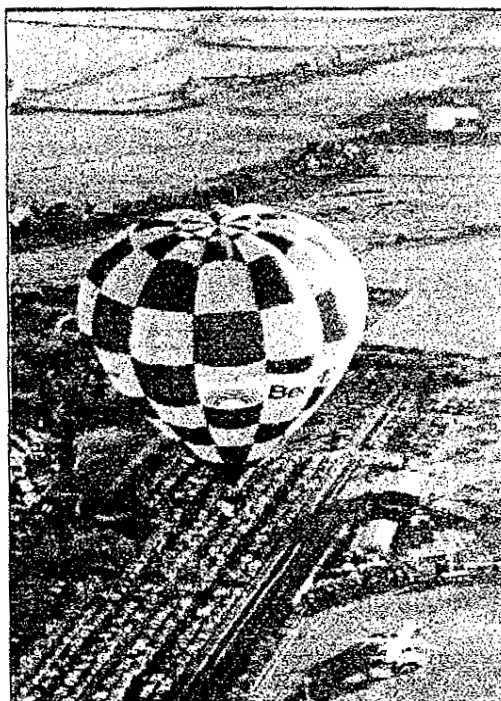
Simon

## One Sunday afternoon

Having scribbled a few notes here and there in the editors bit, I thought I would try my hand at a full article. I am not really sure what to write about, I was considering talking about driving and the need for drivers in the club, I then thought about looking at the flying side and in particular talking about one of my favourite trips with the club. Having only flown 11 times with the club, I felt very limited in choice of flights. My first ever one stands out for that reason, flying in a fistsia with other balloons also holds a certain magic, those flights aside one flight stands out. That is a flight across Bristol I did the other week. I love flying across Bristol mainly because it is my hometown, but also the viewpoint it gives you of the city. Please don't get me wrong though I am not knocking flying out in the countryside. Flying in the countryside allows you to do a lot of low-level work where as the city you are normally quite high up, the countryside tends to be more beautiful and peaceful.

Getting back on track the flight was from Aston court and took place on a Sunday. The weather was just perfect; the sun was shining there was a gentle wind blowing. We arrived in Aston Court quite early, which allowed us, play catch, eat ice cream of and of course watch the other balloons take off before we ventured in to skies ourselves. There were nine balloons in the park in total, four lunched before us, and confirmed the weather conditions we had been given.

We took off just after 16:00 and quickly climbed to two thousand feet this gave as a wonderful view of the Bristol suspension bridge and also the outskirts of the city. As we slowly drifted east more and more of the city was revealed to us, we passed the Wills building, and moved down Park Street towards the centre. Over the new fountains which I am pleased to say were working at the time. We then started to leave the city behind and Lee was already planning a landing spot. We continued towards the countryside, passing crowds of people waving and shouting at us, I guess this is the closest most of us come to being famous. We made on approach to land in a field but could not get the left we needed to make it, so we continued, taking our trip to just over an hour. The in the distance Lee said he was going to land along side the balloon which had taken off before us. We did a cold decent adjusted just before the field to miss the trees and then landed in the middle of the field, a spot on landing which impressed all onboard. The retrieve was waiting just outside the field, so a quick pack away and a small carry out latter and we were in the pub. We managed slip in a quick pint before we had to return to Bristol to re-fuel.




### BUHABs Easter Flying Availability List:

Flying over the Easter holiday i.e. Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> April to Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> April, operates by means of an availability list, **NOT** by the usual method of signing up in the Physics building. So if you are around in the holiday and would like to come out flying, it is **crucial** that you complete and return the availability form below. The way in which this will work is, if the pilot decides to fly he will phone up people who have indicated on the list below that they are available to fly. If you don't return the list you will not get to fly in the holiday.

Please fill out the below form, circling the dates you are available to fly, and return it to the below address.  
Calendar



 \_\_\_\_\_

Student name: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel Number: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

